

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 403
INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES
USCINCEUR
USDOCOLANDSOUTHEAST IZMIR
DIA WASHDC
AMCONSUL ADANA
AMCONSUL ISTANBUL
AMCONSUL IZMIR

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PEPR, TU, GR
SUBJECT: TURKISH PRESS REACTION TO CARAMANLIS ACCEPTANCE
OF MEETING WITH ECEVIT

REF: ANKARA 0590 (DTG 231400Z JAN 78) (NOTAL)

1. MAJOR TURKISH DAILIES JANUARY 24 PRINTED AS PROMINENT
FRONT-PAGE STORY (BUT USUALLY NOT AS MAIN STORY) GREEK PRIMIN
CARAMANLIS' MESSAGE TO TURKISH PRIMIN ECEVIT SAYING THAT
A SUMMIT MEETING (AS PROPOSED BY ECEVIT JANUARY 22) "CAN TAKE
PLACE THIS SPRING, AFTER PRESENTLY ENVISAGED CONTACTS AND MEETINGS
HAVE BEEN CARRIED OUT."

2. WHILE CALLING CARAMANLIS' RESPONSE "POSITIVE", MANY OF
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THE ARTICLES EMPHASIZED THAT ACCEPTANCE OF THE SUMMIT WAS
CONDITIONED ON ITS BEING "ADEQUATELY PREPARED" BEFOREHAND.
MOST PAPERS DID NOT PRINT THE COMPLETE TEXT OF THE MESSAGE,
BUT VIRTUALLY ALL OF THEM INCLUDED CARAMANLIS' STATEMENT
THAT "REESTABLISHMENT OF A RELATIONSHIP OF FRIENDSHIP
AND COOPERATION BETWEEN TURKEY AND GREECE WILL BE
FOR THE BENEFIT OF OUR PEOPLES." PRESS SPECULATED

THAT "THIS SPRING" PROBABLY MEANS IN APRIL OR MAY, AFTER THE AEGEAN CONTINENTAL SHELF TALKS (TO BEGIN FEBRUARY 12), THE CYPRUS INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS (POSSIBLY IN MARCH), AND THE FLIGHT INFORMATION REGION (FIR) TALKS (STILL NOT SCHEDULED) HAVE HAD A CHANCE TO SHOW TRENDS.

3. A JANUARY 24 ARTICLE IN INDEPENDENT GUNAYDIN TOOK A BRIEF SWIPE AT THE FACT THAT, PRIOR TO ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE LATEST CARAMANLIS MESSAGE, THE GREEK PEOPLE HAD NOT BEEN INFORMED THAT CARAMANLIS HAD SENT ECEVIT A MESSAGE CONGRATULATING HIM ON WINNING HIS VOTE OF CONFIDENCE (THE JANUARY 22 ECEVIT LETTER HAD BEEN IN REPLY TO CARAMANLIS' FIRST MESSAGE). IN ADDITION TO COMPLAINING EDITORIALY JANUARY 23 ABOUT THE GREEK FAILURE TO PUBLICIZE CARAMANLIS' CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE, MODERATE REFORMIST (PRO-GOVERNMENT) MILLIYET PRINTED NEWS ANALYSIS JANUARY 24 WHICH STATED THAT ECEVIT, BY DECLARING THAT THE PURPOSE OF THE TALKS WOULD BE TO RESTORE MUTUAL CONFIDENCE RATHER THAN TO FIND IMMEDIATE AND FINAL SOLUTIONS, HAD CUT THE GROUND OUT FROM CARAMANLIS' ARGUMENT THAT A SUMMIT HAD TO BE CAREFULLY PREPARED THROUGH A LONG SERIES OF TALKS AMONG TECHNICIANS. IN THIS MANNER, AS WELL AS BY ISSUING HIS INVITATION SHORTLY BEFORE CARAMANLIS' SCHEDULED DEPARTURE ON A ROUND OF FOREIGN VISITS INTENDED TO ISOLATE TURKEY, ECEVIT PUT CARAMANLIS IN A POSITION WHERE HE WOULD HAVE TO MAKE A DEFINITE RESPONSE. THE ARTICLE CONCLUDED THAT TO OPPOSE ECEVIT'S PROPOSAL OR TO CONTINUE TO DISSEMINATE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SUSPICIONS WOULD EXPOSE GREECE'S DELAYING TACTICS.

5. COMMENT: THE MILLIYET ARTICLE INDICATES IN MILD FORM THE PREVAILING ATTITUDE EXPRESSED IN THE PRESS AND BY EMBASSY CONTACTS: WHILE SERIOUSLY WILLING TO TRY TO SOLVE THEIR MUTUAL PROBLEMS WITH THE GREEKS, THE TURKS SUSPECT THAT THE GREEKS, RATHER THAN SHARING SUCH A DESIRE, WOULD LIKE TO DRAW OUT THEIR DISAGREEMENTS SO THAT THE ARMS EMBARGO WILL CONTINUE TO CAUSE THE MILITARY BALANCE TO SHIFT TOWARD GREECE. SPIERS

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